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REPORTS SERIOUS SCARCITY OF FOOD, CLOTHING

The following details were furnished by an individual who left Albania in November 1951, after a clandestine stay of about 13 months. The observations apply chiefly to the northern part of Albania, especially the region of Gafa Malit, Va i Dejes, Besha, Kurbin, and Ktelle.

The greatest concern of the reopie is the lack of food, especially bread. People are starving because of this year's drought and the scarcity of farm workers. The few able-bodied men not mobilized for other jobs, belong to farm cooperatives which operative on a collective basis. From the cooperatives the people receive too little flour to support life. The harvest is stored in government warehouses and only a few brave peasants dare to keep a little rather than see their families starve

Only the aged who are incapable of work are left at home. Hence, some fields are uncultivated. The quotas which the peasants must turn over to the government sometimes exceed the crops The annual quotas assigned are: 5 to 20 quintals of grain. 25 to 300 kilograms of beans, 5 to 50 kilograms of wool, 50 to 500 eggs, and 50 to 700 kilograms of meat In addition, they must pay taxes varying between 10.000 and 45,000 leks. Such taxation will eventually ruin the peasants.

The monthly allotment of wheat is 5 kilograms per person, but often there is no distribution. Only members of unions and officers' families receive these allotments. Families of "reactionaries" and kulaks receive none. On many days bread is not available at all.

Black market prices are extremely high. Wheat can be bought for 150 leks (3 dollars) a kilogram, but no one can but more than 20 kilograms [at one time].

The clothing situation is equally bad. To get 2 meters of linen or a pair of shoes, people must deliver to the state warehouses such foodstuffs as meat, butter, eggs, and cheese. Money is of little use for such purchases.

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